Introductory remarks
From the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
to the ICAO Technical Workshop on Air Transport Facilitation: Policies and Capacity Building
Solutions Related to Border Control Management

(Windhoek, Namibia, 23 July 2019)

Honorable Minister John Mutorwa, Minister of Works and Transport,

Mr. Reinhard Gartner, Interim Executive Director of Namibia Civil Aviation Authority

Distinguished States Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am deeply honoured to join you here in Windhoek today for this important and very timely ICAO capacity building event held under the umbrella of the ICAO AFI SEC/FAL Plan.

2. Please let me express ICAO's very deep appreciation for Namibia's generosity in hosting this event and excellent support for its preparation, as well as for ICAO's priorities more generally.

3. Aviation Security and the facilitation of passenger movements are important and reciprocal priorities in air transport. Together they comprise one of the most important Strategic Objectives of ICAO.

4. ICAO's efforts in this area have been guided by consecutive amendments to the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) contained in Annex 9 to the Chicago Convention, which focuses directly on facilitating passenger travel.

5. In addition to Annex 17 - *Security* provisions, Annex 9 SARPs serve as important tools in support of improved travel security, and cover areas of government responsibility relating to both facilitation and border security priorities.

6. These priorities are set out in the relevant ICAO annexes, and support the corresponding priorities defined in the UNSC resolutions 2178 (2014), 2309 (2016), 2396 (2017), and 2482 (2019) in relation to our common battle against terrorism and more specifically Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs).

7.   This highlights for us how the prevention of FTF movements can greatly benefit from effective border controls and travel document security, as notably defined in ICAO's Machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs) provisions and specifications contained in our Doc 9303 – a key companion publication to Annex 9.

8.   In relation to this priority, and in order to ensure that fraudulent, counterfeit, stolen and lost passports and other travel documents are invalidated and removed from circulation, States are required to report these via INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Document (SLTD) database.

9.   Others Annex 9 SARPs, for example those related to the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme or 'TRIP' strategy, are directly linked to States' obligations for passenger data exchange as detailed in UNSC resolutions 2178 and 2396.

10. ICAO has accordingly amended Annex 9 to reflect this requirement for advance passenger information (API) as a new Standard, which became applicable in February 2018.

11. Another impetus for our quick action was the recognition of the fact that API systems greatly streamline border controls for the vast majority of travellers, and that they mitigate threats relating to terrorist movements. It might also therefore be considered for other modes of transport.

12. Doc 9303 interoperability specifications are important to this process as they help to permit successful API transmission. For example the verification of ePassports through the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) helps assure the authenticity of API data.

13. Despite these helpful ICAO resources, however, and the mandatory status for API adherence, we are still confronted today by the fact that just 67 of ICAO's 193 member States have established an API system.

14. At this point I would like to draw your attention to one of the most pressing topics for the aviation security and facilitation community, and an important priority for today's meeting.

15. I am referring of course to Passenger Name Record or 'PNR' data. Per resolution 2396, States are requested to develop capabilities to collect, process and analyze PNR data.

16. They are also required to ensure that PNR data is used by, and shared with, all of their competent national authorities.

17. Although resolution 2396 has placed a legal impetus on all States to develop and implement effective PNR programmes, we must recognize together that only 26 States are currently requesting PNR data.

18. Our work towards a PNR standard got started last September, through our Facilitation Panel. A PNR Task Force with wide geographical representation was then established and we expect its final report by September of this year.

19. More generally, we should take heart that ICAO Annexes 9 and 17 reflect many standards and recommended practices in line with the relevant UNSC resolutions, and which are supported by the detailed guidance ICAO develops for States to help assure their effective implementation.

20. From this perspective we can appreciate that ICAO's auditing and monitoring activities for security also provide a helpful view on the status of related UNSC resolutions, and in aid of the assistance and support we may need to tailor for States.

21. In this regard, ICAO remains committed to contributing appropriate API and PNR institutional knowledge and to actively participate in the implementation of the recently launched the UNCT Travel Programme.

22. Everyone involved in this effort must remain cognizant, however, that our cooperation will only be effective if its results are supported by our Member States.

23.   In closing now I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate our great thanks to our host and of course I look forward to our exchanges in the next 3 days.

24.   Thank you.